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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of an advisory council is to assist and advise the teacher and administration in planning, organizing, and conducting an instructional program in agricultural education that will effectively meet the needs of the people in the community. Advisory councils are classified as general (serves all of vocational education or a selected occupational segment), local option (serves as a specific consulting committee), and ad hoc (serves to advise on a particular problem or task). The procedures for establishing the council are described: preliminary planning, selecting council members, organizing and starting the new council, officers, rotating members, constitution and by-laws, and frequency of meetings. Suggested activities to be undertaken by the council and the agricultural education teacher are provided. Guidelines are presented to insure the maintenance of the council. References are included. One-half of the document contains appended materials: a sample constitution and by-laws for the agricultural advisory council of a high school, a sample outline for a handbook for committee members, the functions of the advisory council member, sample agenda, examples of items for consideration by the committee, and an open letter in reply to an invitation to serve on an advisory council. (Author/EC)

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ORGANIZING AND USING AN ADVISORY COUNCIL

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ORGANIZING AND USING AN ADVISORY COUNCIL

I. Introduction

The local department of Agricultural Education has the responsibility for the agricultural and leadership training of the people of the community who are at present, and who contemplate being engaged in the field of agriculture. The teacher of agriculture is charged with the responsibility of developing and carrying out a program of instruction that is adapted to the agricultural needs and opportunities found in the particular community in which he works. Even the most capable and energetic teacher needs the assistance and support of the most capable leadership in the community in developing and executing a complete, well-rounded instructional program in Agricultural Education. To make educational programs democratic in nature, the people who are affected by a program should have a part in its planning and execution.

The Annual and Long-Range Improvement Plan for the Agricultural Education Service outlines the following objectives related to advisory councils:

5.5 By June 30, 1980, all school divisions with agricultural education programs will have organized local advisory committess in accordance with the local 5-year plan of Vocational Education.

5.5.1 By October 1, 1975, material on Agricultural Education advisory committees will be provided all school divisions.

5.5.2 By January 15, 1976, the local school divisions 5-year plans for Vocational Education will include a section dealing with the organization and operation of the local agricultural education advisory committee.

5.5.3 By March 1, 1976, updated materials on the organization and utilization of advisory councils for Agricultural Education will be prepared for dissemination to Agricultural Education teachers by the teacher education staff.

5.5.4 By September 1, 1976, the Agricultural Education service will, as a part of their summer teachers conference, include in-service activities centered around the utilization of advisory committees.

"An advisory council, beginning with the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, has continuously been a desirable feature of the program of agricultural education but never a necessary feature (5:1)". This situation can now be ameliorated. With the above objectives for the Standards of Quality, increased emphasis will be placed on advisory councils by all concerned with Agricultural Education.

Since all of the people in a community affected by the Agricultural Education program cannot logically take part in its planning, then they should be represented by someone who shares and understands their interest and needs. Advisory councils made up of persons who represent the school and agricultural interests of the community have provided a solution, in many communities, to the needs of the teacher and department in planning and conducting an effective program of Agricultural Education.

Definitions. "Citizen groups discussed in this paper may be defined as lay citizens without legal authority who advise a governing body regarding policy and/or who advise a professional staff regarding program and procedures (10:5)."

". . . A group of persons outside the education profession chosen from the community, state, or nation to advise educators regarding an educational program. The advisory committee is usually a formally organized committee appointed by proper authority or authorities for a definite time (2:1). The terms "advisory" and "consultive", "committee" and "council" are often used interchangeably with reference to this activity and function (2:2)."

Types of Councils. The types of advisory councils can generally be classified as general, local option and ad hoc, although many other titles are often assigned to them.

The general advisory council can be viewed from two frames of reference in Agricultural Education. The general advisory council might serve all of vocational education as illustrated in Figure 2 for a large school. It might also serve as an "occupational committee" in a small school system to advise only the Agricultural Education department. General advisory councils may exist on the State and National level to advise all of Vocational Education and Agricultural Education.

The local option committee, a term often used by Dr. A. H. Krebs, would serve the purpose of a "specific consulting committee" as shown in Figure 2. A local option committee would certainly be recommended for departments with several options offered. Under this arrangement, an Agricultural Education department might have a General Advisory Committee and the options might have "option committees", as illustrated in Figure 3. An option committee might be called a craft committee by our friends in trade and industrial education. The purpose of the option committee would be to advise upon the specific Agricultural Education option.

Ad hoc committees meet and serve to advise upon a particular problem or task. They are traditionally dissolved once they have met their particular objective, or if need be they may form a permanent committee.

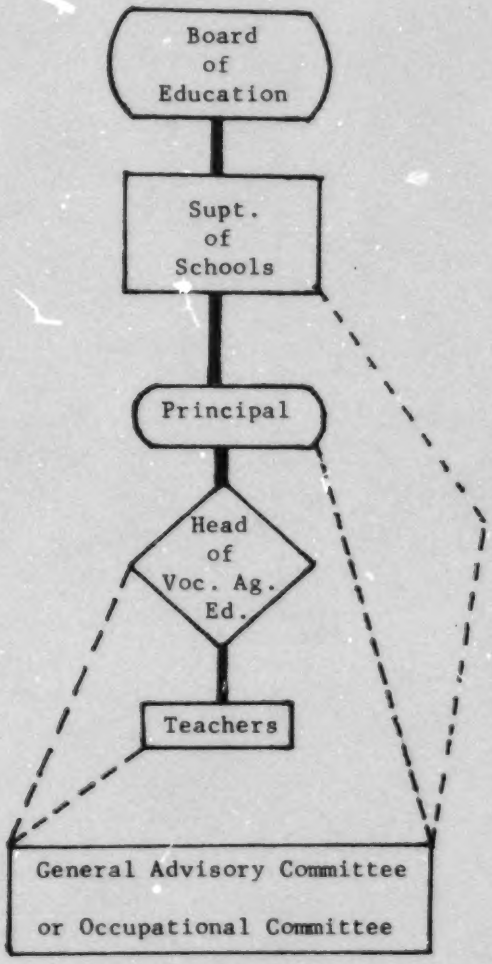
Another type of committee is commonly used when a new program or option is being planned. This is a special form of an ad hoc committee and is called a steering committee.

The aforementioned general agricultural advisory council might be comprised of the members of, or their elected representative, the option committees.

Figure 1

Organization Chart for Administration

of Voc. Ag. Ed. in Small School Systems

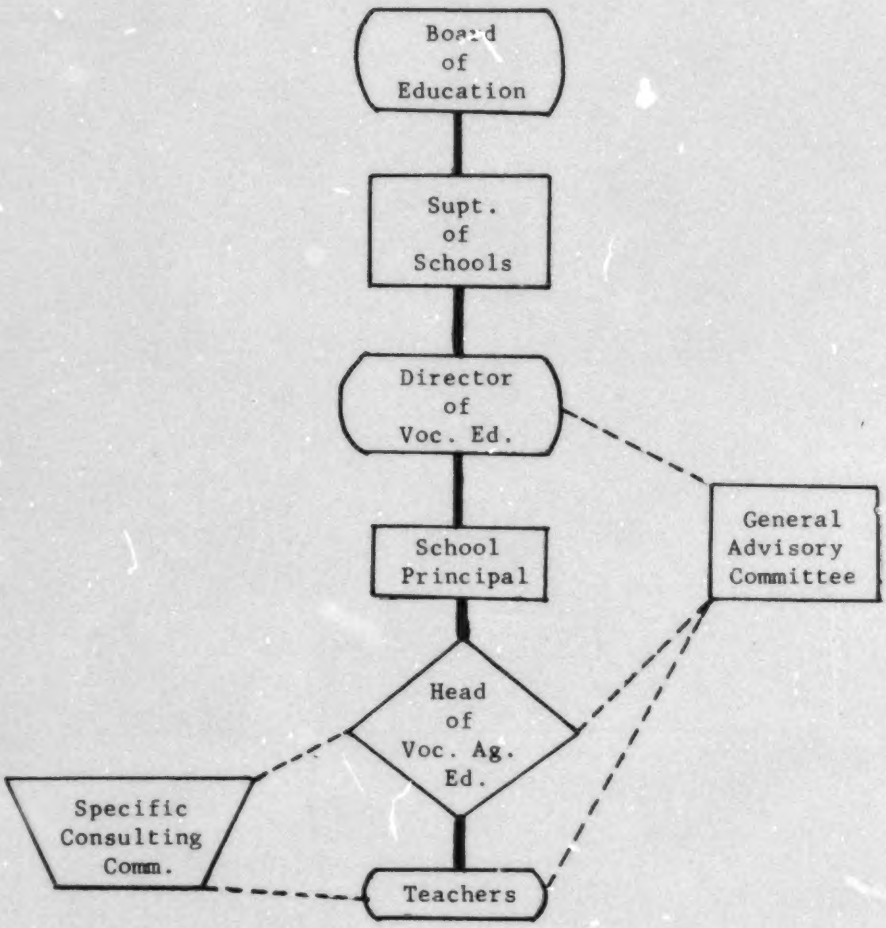


_____ ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION --------- ADVISORY FUNCTION

Figure 2

Organization Chart for Administration

of Voc. Ag. Ed. in Large School System



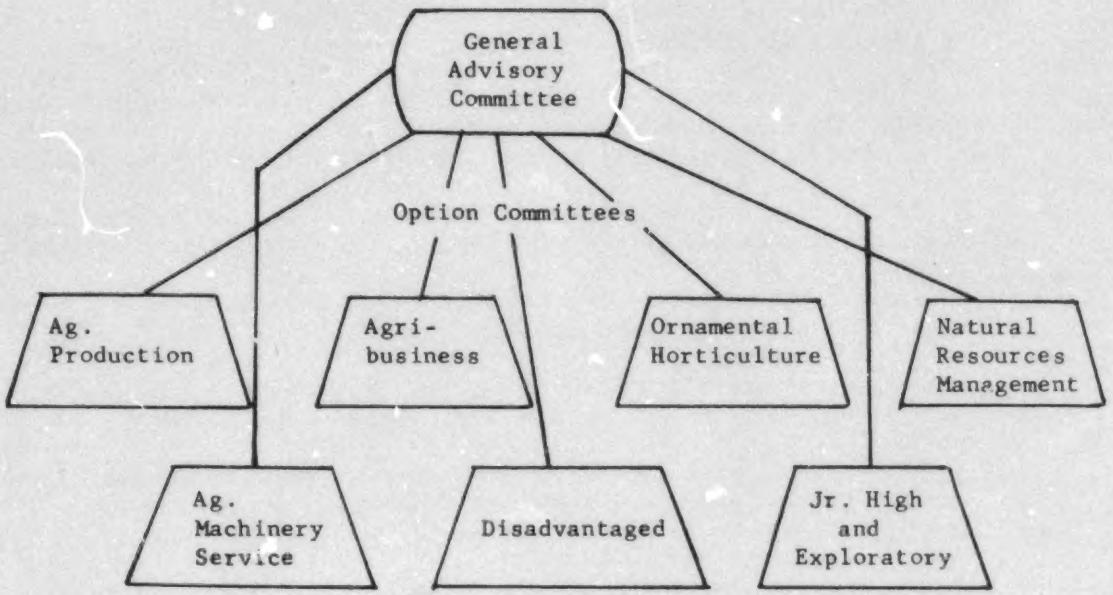
_____ ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION

------ ADVISORY FUNCTION

Figure 3

Agricultural Education Department

Advisory Council Organization



The following material is prepared to assist teachers of Agricultural Education in Virginia to organize and use advisory councils effectively in planning and conducting their programs of Agricultural Education.

II. Purposes of An Advisory Council

The primary purpose of an advisory council is to assist and advise the teacher and administration in planning, organizing, and conducting an instructional program in Agricultural Education that will effectively meet the educational needs of the people in the community.

In addition to the primary purpose there are many other purposes of an advisory council. Some of them are listed below. For a more complete list one should consult the references listed at the end of this publication.

A. An advisory council is a m[illegible]elping the teacher to mobilize the community leadership to aid [illegible]gricultural training program.

B. To improve the public relations program by providing two-way communication between the department and the community.

C. Assist in the evaluation of the program, thus resulting in better objectives, improved program and more adequate facilities.

D. To guide and support the teacher, thus making it possible for him to be more effective, gain more satisfaction from his work, develop more confidence, and to advance more rapidly in his profession.

E. Assist in adjusting the program to changes, both gradual and emergencies, thus keeping it more up-to-date and desgined to serve the future rather than the past.

F. Assist the department and administration in developing policies for the operation of the department.

G. To insure the continuation and stabilization of the Agricultural Education department and its program where changes occur in either the instructional or administrative staffs.

H. To assist in clarifying and strengthening the relationships of the Agricultural Education department with the agricultural, business, commercial, civic and other organizations of the community.

I. To assist in determining the community agricultural training needs and job opportunities and facilities needed to meet these needs.

J. An advisory council provides recommendations and advises. They are not vested with the authority to make administrative decisions on policy (1:1).

III. Establishing the Council

The teacher must have a desire for and feel sure that he is willing to accept a council's suggestions, make maximum use of it and keep it functioning. He should also be conscious of the fact that only through a cooperative effort with the people can he have a successful program in vocational agriculture.

A. Preliminary Planning

1. The teacher should become thoroughly familiar with the purposes, procedures of organization, and the functions of a council before starting to organize.

2. The teacher should consult his school principal, superintendent and school board members to secure their approval and backing and inform them of the purposes and functions of a council.

3. The teacher, with the assistance of administrative officials, should develop a statement of policy regarding the activities of the council which is approved by the school board, to include such items as:
   a. The purpose of the council
   b. The duties of the council
   c. The area or field in which it operates
   d. The council's limitations
   e. The number to be selected
   f. Method to be used in selecting members
   g. The length of term for council members
   h. The relationship of the council to the teacher, department of Agricultural Education, and school administrators, including the school board.

   The council constitution (Appendix A) should reflect the local policy.

B. Selecting Council Members

1. After approval for the establishment of a council the teacher, together with the principal and superintendent selects and nominates the council members for approval by the school board. Only those members should be selected who are public spirited, interested in the welfare of all the people in the community and willing to devote adequate time to the council. A large number should be considered from which a definite number is selected.

2. The size of the council will depend somewhat upon the area served by the school, the number of communities and total population of the school area. In most communities from 9 to 12 members make the most efficient councils; while in county consolidated schools, a larger number would probably be more representative and desirable.

3. It is very important to have all of the agricultural interests in the community represented on the council, including the production, processing, marketing, supply, and service segments of the agricultural industry.

4. In selecting a representative council for a department, groups having such diversified agricultural interest as the following should be considered.

   a. Geographical location -- all parts of the community should be represented.
   b. Farmers who are representative of those agriculture commodities produced locally.
   c. Large and small farm operators, including part-time, share croppers, tenants and in some areas farm workers.
   d. Representatives of agricultural businesses.
   e. Professional and business persons serving the area who have an interest in agriculture.
   f. Members of farm organizations.
   g. All age groups above the high school level. Many of the best council members have been in the group between 25 to 35 years of age.
   h. Members of the young and adult farmer classes.
   i. Persons of different economic levels.
   j. Different religious, political and nationality groups should be recognized somewhat in proportion to their numbers in the community.
   k. Women should be considered.
   l. Parents of members of the high school vocational agriculture classes should be represented.

5. It should be noted that a council member may be a representative of two or more of the groups listed above. It should also be emphasized that a council member should not think of himself as representing a particular group, but instead be interested in the whole community.

6. Public officials such as school administrators and related agricultural agencies, should be invited to attend meetings of the council when their presence is believed necessary and valuable, but are not considered official members of the council. They may be designated ex-officio members. School officials are the recipients of the advice and should not have a vote in formulating the advice.

7. After members have been selected the superintendent should write each member and inform him that he has been selected, and ask him to serve.

8. After the superintendent has written the members, the teacher should visit each of them to find out if they will serve, make further explanations as needed and notify them of the first meeting date.

Krebs (11:4) outlines an alternative procedure by random selection. He recommends that a complete list of eligible members be developed, the list is stratified by agricultural interest area, determine the number to be selected from each area, number all people within each group consecutively, draw the nominees by random selection and select about twice as many as needed to allow flexibility in invitation by the School Board. The list should be kept in the order drawn in case someone needs to be replaced.

Appendix F may provide the reader with some insight into the expectations of a committee member.

C. Organizing and Starting The New Council

Getting a council started on the right track is most important. The first meeting of the council may make or break it. It is recommended that the division superintendent, the chairman of the school board, or the local school board member act as chairman of the first meeting, rather than the principal or teacher of agriculture. He should have a thorough understanding of what's to be done. The chairman should heartily welcome the selected members who are to serve and make them feel they are wanted and will play an important part in the functioning of the department. It is important that the principal of the school and all members of the council be present.

The main purpose of this meeting is to acquaint the members with their duties and responsibilities as council members and allow them an opportunity to ask questions and get straight any matters they may have regarding the council. It would probably be best not to organize at this first meeting, but give members a chance to think about whom they want for officers.

It is advisable to have an outsider who is familiar with advisory councils to come in and talk to the group the first night. An outsider can say things and get across what a local person cannot. Topics that should be thoroughly discussed during the orientation period of new councils are:

1. General purposes and policies of councils.
2. Desirable activities.
3. What other successful councils are doing.
4. How councils are organized.
5. Constitution and by-laws needed.
6. Frequency and place of meetings.

At the first meeting the members should decide how they want to organize, when they want to meet for the organizational meeting, appoint a nominating committee and possibly a committee to recommend when, where and how often to hold meetings. (See Krebs, 11:9-10, for agendas for meetings.)

At the second meeting they would elect officers, decide on when, where and how often to meet, appoint a constitution and by-laws committee and other business necessary to get straightened out on how to operate. Let the newly elected chairman take over as soon as elected. The Agricultural Education teacher should not serve as chairman.

During this meeting the members may desire more discussion on how an advisory council functions, its purposes and activities. As much time as is needed should be taken to thoroughly familiarize each member with the functions of a council.

If the organization and orientation has progressed satisfactorily to this point, it may be wise to select a timely and important topic for discussion. The discussion may be started at this meeting or decided upon for the next meeting.

A council should start off on a sound basis by considering worthwhile activities. The first year is the most important. Some of the important activities of a council the first year may be as follows:

1. Becoming familiar with the whole movement of Agricultural Education and its application locally.

2. Becoming familiar with legal and administrative policies of Agricultural Education departments.

3. Becoming familiar with the local department and its program. Study its objectives and accomplishments.

4. Becoming acquainted with the needs of the local community and community agricultural opportunities.

5. Review the local school objectives and policies.

6. Become familiar with vocational legislation and funding procedures.

7. See Appendix D for a Sample Meeting Agenda, and Appendix E for other meeting topics.

Other activities which should be considered in getting the council properly oriented and started are as follows:

1. Getting properly organized with adequate operating rules and regulations. Review a local handbook for committee members. See Appendix B for an outline and Appendix C for a sample handbook.

2. Becoming acquainted with the duties and responsibilities of council members.

3. Becoming acquainted with what other councils are doing.

4. Selecting activities on which the council wants to work and appoint committees for these activities.

5. Become acquainted with fellow council members and school staff.

Guidelines for Agenda Items. The following questions should be resolved in determining the appropriateness of an item for the agenda of the advisory council.

1. Is this a real problem?

2. Is this a problem the school really wants solved?

3. Will the school use the recommendation of the council?

4. Will the council be, or become, interested in the problem?

5. Is the council competent to consider and make recommendations on the problem?

6. Do members have sufficient knowledge of facts and background information to make worthwhile suggestions?

D. Officers

The council should have a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and one or two additional members to serve on the executive committee with the three elected officers. The chairman and vice-chairman should come from the regular members and not be a school administrative official nor the agriculture teacher. The agriculture teacher may serve as the secretary if the council so desires.

E. Rotating Members

Rotate membership on the council so that one-third of the members are replaced each year. Usually the original members are selected by lot for terms of 1, 2, and 3 years, and thereafter members are selected for a full three year term.

F. Constitution and By-laws (See sample in Appendix A)

1. What to include in the constitution:

a. Persons and agencies to whom the council is to advise
b. Purposes and duties
c. Number of members

d. Manner of selecting members
e. Length of term of members
f. Provision for eliminating inactive members
g. When a member can serve a second term on the council.
h. Representation of the school administrators at council meetings
i. Requirements of council minutes
j. Officers and committees and their duties

2. What to include in the by-laws:

a. Number and frequency of meetings
b. Length and time of meetings
c. Place of meetings
d. Method of calling special meetings
e. Method of notifying members of meetings
f. Preparation of the agenda for meetings
g. Special committees

G. Frequency of Meetings

The frequency of council meetings should be determined by the council. Most councils that are serious about their work will choose to meet at least bi-monthly or more often. A definite regular meeting date should be set, with special meetings called as needed. Unless a council meets regularly and rather frequently, interest will lag and little can be accomplished on important projects and undertakings.

IV. Suggested Activities of an Advisory Council

It would be impractical to attempt to list all of the activities in which an advisory council would be expected to participate. Activities of councils will vary with communities. Councils, under the leadership of the teacher of Agricultural Education, will determine their own activities suitable to their communities. Since councils are primarily interested in improving the educational program and activities of the Agricultural Education department some of the primary activities in which councils would be expected to participate are as follows:

A. Assist in determining the purposes of the Agricultural Education department, the area to be served, and the people to be reached in comparison the the people who are being reached.

B. Assist in determining community needs and advising on the type of educational program to be offered, including community services.

C. Determining the opportunities for agricultural employment in the community.

D. Assisting in planning and developing the program of work and teaching program to adequately meet the Agricultural Education needs of the community.

E. Advising and assisting in determining the need for and organizing young and adult farmer classes in the community.

F. Assuring the teacher as to the practicability of the program offered and, through this and other means, developing public confidence in the teacher.

G. Advising and assisting the teacher to develop and conduct a satisfactory public relations program.

H. Evaluating the program of the department and making recommendations for improvement.

Other activities in which the council may engage in advising and assisting the teacher in planning and conducting his program may be as follows:

A. Advising a new teacher about local customs, attitudes, community nationalities, and community events that might affect his adjustment in the community.

B. Advising and assisting when emergency situations arise so that the department may, more effectively meet the problems.

C. Assisting a new teacher to continue the program started by the previous teacher.

D. Assisting in unifying the activities of the program of Agricultural Education with the programs of the several groups and agencies in the school service area that are interested in agriculture and Agricultural Education.

E. Studying problems presented by the board of education on which further information and ideas are desired and then making recommendations.

F. Advising on supplies and equipment needed, such as reference books, laboratory supplies, farm mechanics equipment, and general supplies.

G. Visiting the supervised occupational experience programs being developed by the students and advising on the further improvement and expansion of these programs.

H. Learning the resources of the agricultural department, the sources of its funds and the uses which may be made of them, and the conditions under which it must work.

I. Advising on the program and activities of the local FFA Chapter.

V. Maintaining The Council

Maintaining a council is more important than establishing one. If a council is not maintained and used, it is better to have not started one in the first place.

A. Some reasons why councils fail:

1. They are not set up correctly in the first place.

2. Members have not been properly oriented and do not understand their duties.

3. They commonly die from inactivity. They are not kept busy or they have too little to do.

4. Meetings are not planned and they accomplish too little.

5. Meetings are held too infrequently. Little carryover from one meeting to another meeting takes place.

6. Teacher and administrators take too little interest in the council and fail to make adequate use of it.

B. Some suggestions for maintaining a council are:

1. Plan each meeting carefully. This should be done by the executive committee with the assistance of the teacher. Plan each meeting around one or more important phases of the program.

2. Keep council members busy on valuable projects. Smaller ad hoc committees may be appointed to work on special projects.

3. Keep all members informed of their duties, particularly the new members each year.

4. Stick to the rules and regulations which have been adopted by the council.

5. Teachers and administrators take an active interest in the council. They work with the council but do not dominate it.

6. Avoid domination by individual members.

7. Have regular scheduled meetings. Hold meetings frequently enough to carry out a good program.

8. Publicize council activities. Local newspaper articles on activities and achievements of the council are suggested.

9. Individual initiative and ideas of council members should be encouraged. Make members feel that their participation and contributions are important.

10. Keep a complete set of minutes and a record of all council activities and make them available to all council members.

11. Notify members of meetings and meeting topics.

12. Visit members regularly.

13. Hold meetings in the Agricultural Education department and not in the homes of members.

14. Review accomplishments at the end of the year.

15. Teachers or administrators should never attempt to speak for the council or to take action in their behalf without consulting them.

16. It is a voluntary organization and members should not be expected to carry-out long, detailed work assignments.

17. Do not conceal facts from the council.

C. Some things advisory councils should not do:

1. They should not put on drives for money.

2. They should not put pressure on the school board.

3. They should not start new organizations.

4. They should not meddle in general school affairs or try to establish policy.

5. They should not try to run the school.

VI. Conclusion

The advisory council, when carefully selected, properly organized, and tactfully used, should be of inestimable value to the teacher of Agricultural Education, his department, and to the community. The extent to which an advisory council functions depends upon the vision, initiative and tact of the teacher as well as the members of the council.

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Appendices

Appendix A

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
FOR THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
OF _____ HIGH SCHOOL

Article I - Name

The name of the organization shall be the Agriculture Advisory Council of _____ High School.

Article II - Advisory to

Those people in charge of setting up and carrying out the activities of the Vocational Agriculture Department.

Article III - Area to Serve

Shall include all the service areas of the school.

Article IV - Purposes and Duties of Council

1. Help to develop and evaluate a course of study for high school classes.

2. In the development of the program of work and community activities of the FFA by suggesting areas that need emphasis, and activities that are appropriate to the community.

3. In the development of plans for Supervised Farm Practice with the high school class by reason of their intimate knowledge of individuals and situations in the community.

4. By helping with the placement of Vocational Agriculture students on farms for experience and by helping with the establishment of graduates in farming.

5. In the improvement of the physical plant for Vocational Agriculture because of their intimate knowledge of the needs of the department.

6. In field of public relations by interpreting and publicizing the program of Agricultural Education to people in the community, and by defining the job of the teacher of agriculture. Also by carrying pertinent information of the department to the community and by bringing information of the community to the department.

7. In establishing out-of-school classes, together with helping to work out courses of study recruiting members and evaluating the results of the program.

8. The council shall advise on all matters concerned with the Agriculture Department.

Article V - Number of Members

There shall be nine members on the council.

Article VI - Selecting and Replacing Members

Members shall be selected or replaced by drawing up a list of potential members as suggested by the present members.

The suggested list of potential members shall be submitted to the school administrator to submit to the board of education.

The board of education may as it so desires approve the suggested list or appoint any members they see fit to serve.

Article VII - Term of Members

Members of initial council shall draw for terms in one, two, and three year lots of three.

Members will be chosen such that one-third of the membership will leave the council each year.

Article VIII - Inactive Members

Members missing one-half or more of all meetings per year shall be eliminated from the council.

Final decision on eliminating inactive members is subject to majority vote of members present.

Article IX - Reappointment of Members

Members shall be eligible for reappointment to the council one year after expiration of former term.

Article X - Representation of School Administrators and Board of Education

Members of the school board of education and school administrators shall serve as ex-officio members.

The school administrators will be advised as to time and date of all meetings.

Article XI - Council Officers and Committees

There shall be a president whose duties will consist of calling meetings to order, carry out business of meetings, and appoint all committees.

There shall be a vice president who will preside at meetings when the president is absent.

The secretary will keep a record of the minutes of each meeting, carry on any correspondence of the council, and prepare an agenda for meetings of the council.

The council executive committee shall consist of the president, vice president, and secretary.

Article XII - Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the membership present at a meeting.

By-laws may be adopted at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of the membership present at a meeting.

Article XIII - Voting

Ex-officio members shall not be eligible to vote. The agriculture teacher shall not be eligible to vote.

By-Laws

1. Stated Meetings -

   There shall be stated meetings one each calendar quarter.

2. Special meetings -

   Shall be subject to call by the president.

3. Time of meetings -

   During the first and fourth calendar quarters meetings will be held at 7 P. M. (EST).

   During the second and third calendar quarters meetings will be held at 8 P. M. (EST).

4. Length of meeting -

   Meetings should not exceed two hours.

5. Method of calling special meetings -

   The meetings will be called at the discretion of the executive board of the council.

6. Preparation of agenda -

   The secretary shall prepare an agenda before each meeting.

Appendix B

Sample Outline for a Handbook for Committee Members

I. Importance of Advisory Committees

II. Method of Selecting Members

III. Length of Term of Office and Plan for Rotation of Membership

IV. Functions of Advisory Committees

V. Objectives of the School

VI. School Policies

VII. Duties and Responsibilities of School Representatives

VIII. Brief Summary of Federal Acts for Vocational Education

IX. Basic Provisions of Ag. Ed. Section, State Plan for Vocational Education

X. Statement of Appreciation

Appendix C

Advisory Council Member[1]

You Are Now a Member of a Career Advisory Council

You have been asked to lend your capabilities, experience and knowledge as an ADVISOR to an agricultural education program in your school. Since you represent a segment of business and industry for which your school is educating students, you are valuable asset toward the proper preparation of these students who may be considering or actually entering the educational program of their choice.

Students, who eventually will work and live in the community, often must have serious consultation and career exposure in order to help choose a career. After making a choice, the student needs to learn enough to: (1) compete successfully in the job market; (2) find employment in the career specialty for which he is educated and to hold that employment; or (3) qualify for higher education in the career field of his or her choice. To provide the modern, up-to-date training for future citizens, your school needs your advice, assistance, and council.

What your ADVISORY COUNCIL will do and how effective it will be in developing a quality agricultural educational program depends upon the combination of your recommendations, the educational beliefs of your school, the adequacy of the instruction (including sufficient equipment and facilities), and the motivation of the individual student.

Why Have An Advisory Council?

An Advisory Council of interested, able and concerned citizens is the most productive and relevant method to involve the community in education. It is a vital link between the community and the school. It can give advice, make recommendations and provide service otherwise not available.

Why Get Involved?
Which of the Below is Important to You?

Recognizes your experience and knowledge in your business.

Provides the satisfaction of making your knowledge and expertise available to your community school.

Potential employment of students who can be a source of part-time employees for your business.

Provides a source of better trained and experienced future full-time employees.

Offers the satisfaction of being involved with the education of youth and adults of your community.

[1]Adapted from 3:1-6.

Gives you an investment in building leadership for the future "work force" of the community. This helps keep the community strong to protect the economic strength of your business.

Advisory Council

Definition

AN ADVISORY COUNCIL IS A GROUP OF PERSONS SELECTED TO COLLECTIVELY ADVISE REGARDING CAREER EDUCATION EFFORTS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. MEMBERS ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM OUTSIDE THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND ARE SELECTED BECAUSE OF SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE.

Purpose

To collectively advise, make recommendations and give service to the school, its students, instructors and administrators.

How You Can Help

Advise on developing policy and local philosophy in regard to agricultural programs.

Help determine educational goals and requirements pertaining to the community in relation to each student.

Help establish and maintain good communication between the community and school.

Advise in developing the educational objectives for Agricultural Education.

Aid in evaluating the educational program or programs in respect to community requirements and individual career accomplishment of its graduates.

Advise the school administration relative to proper qualifications of instructors for certain specialized programs.

Aid in establishing criteria for selection of students.

Assist in long term planning for programs including curriculum, equipment and facilities.

Promote certain educational services to students and citizens such as career information, job placement, public relations, obtaining resource people for the classroom, etc.

Term of Membership

It is understood that individuals who serve on different ADVISORY COUNCILS often have busy schedules. On the other hand each member must realize that he or she must be willing to devote sufficient time to the council activities to be effective.

In order that membership may not become burdensome to any one member and so that other individuals who have expressed an interest in the educational program may have the opportunity to make a contribution, the suggested length of membership is three years.

It is suggested that the first advisory council members draw lots for one, two, or three year terms. Thus each year one-third of the membership will be replaced. This insures new members each year with varied experience and expertise and allows others in the community to make their contribution to the school educational program. At the same time, with two-thirds of the membership continuing, it allows for continuity in leadership and needed stability of the council operation. A person who has served a term as a member should be ineligible for reappointment until one year has elapsed following expiration of his term. Some valuable former members can be utilized as consultants for specific parts of the program but for a limited time only.

Advise and Recommendations
What Happens?

After the council secretary documents the council's recommendations, the School Representative then submits the request to proper authority for action. This could be the Superintendent of Schools. President of the Board of Education, Vocational Director or whomever has the authority to implement.

The recommendation is considered by the administrative authority or teacher and a report is returned to the chairman of the council by the education representative as soon as possible to the action taken or anticipated. There should be a minimum of delay for this report to be made.

One or more of three results should take place.

the recommendation is implemented as presented.

the recommendation is to be implemented with stated modifications, with explanations.

the recommendation is declined, with explanations.

Check List

What An Advisory Council Can Do

Help For Teachers and Administrators

Assisting school administrators and instructors in establishing a philosophy of Agricultural Education

Assisting in the preparation of measurable objectives for Agricultural Education

Maintaining all advisory council activity on an advisory status only, but at the same time realize the school needs your assistance to insure community relevance to local educational careers

Assisting in establishing Agricultural Education programs and advising on the use of proper criteria of evaluation

Extending your expertise for clinics, in-service workshops, seminars and training programs to school Agricultural Education faculty

Assisting in establishing teacher qualifications for specific occupation teaching

Identifying substitute or resouce instructors from the community to assist regular teachers in the classroom and/or teach in specialized program areas both day and evening.

Assisting in preparing job descriptions on which course content may be used.

Suggesting general occupational abilities necessary for a graduate of an occupational area to have in order to compete in the community job market

Providing criteria for awards and prizes to outstanding students

Identifying potential training stations for the placement of students in cooperative education programs

Arranging meetings to establish cooperative relationships between the schools and industry (also parents in high school or elementary schools)

Student Career Selection, Placement and Evaluation

Assisting in public relations procedures both externally and internally to encourage young people to consider vocational and technical education to include:

assisting in the formulation of a speaker's bureau to make speeches to civic clubs, career day meetings, etc.

assisting in establishment of procedures for approaching parents to provide vocational and/or technical information

providing ideas for taking steps to acquaint younger students and teachers in lower grades with the program

considering ideas for a system of visits to vocational center area schools to acquaint them with the programs available to them

assisting in procedures for approaching and providing information for guidance counselors who help encourage students into the programs

Assisting in the establishment of criteria and qualifications necessary for students to apply for admission to the agricultural programs.

Providing information concerning desirable aptitudes, education and experience preferred for entry-level jobs and in the area of higher job level specialization requiring advanced training

Arranging plant and/or field visits for students and instructors (also parents in high school or elementary) that are interesting and educational, and which in some instances may serve as classroom instruction as relevant to work experience information

Providing specialized vocational literature to teachers, counselors, parents and students; such as occupational folders, brochures, pamphlets, etc.

Assisting the instructors in the formation of accurate, realistic specialized instructional projects for group and individualized instruction

Assisting in the development and obtaining of qualification, certification and licensing tests, including apprenticeship requirements to be used for initial employment of graduates

Participating in and helping to interpret surveys of local industry manpower needs, job availability, anticipated employment in the community and identification of employment areas

Assisting in placement of students in part- and full-time employment and advise in job placement of agricultural program students

Assisting with procedures for continuous evaluation of the programs and follow-up evaluation of graduates for program accountability which spotlights the value of the program or programs to the community and its employment needs

Educational Programs Pertaining to Career Information and Community-Parent Involvement

Evaluating and issuing supporting recommendations on budgetary requests, physical conditions, adequacy of equipment and supplies, laboratory shops, classrooms, etc.

Assisting in the development and periodic evaluation of course content to assure its being up-to-date in meeting the changing skill and knowledge needs of the community, and employment area for industry and business

Obtaining needed school equipment and supplies on loan, as gifts, or at special prices

Assisting in the establishment of standards of proficiency to be met by students and helping with job analysis and task analysis in specialized areas

Assisting in the development of school procedures concerning the kinds and volume of production work or "live jobs" to be produced by students so that this work will be of instructional value in the educational program

Establishing and helping to maintain a library of specialized visual aids, magazines, and books concerning industry and business in conjunction with the school library

Assisting in the development of special educational and training programs for disadvantaged and handicapped students conducted with funds made available by the Manpower Development and Training Act, the Economic Opportunity Act, etc., in accordance with the needs of the community and representatives of the administrative agency

Assisting in the development of evening school skill improvement and technical courses for employed personnel on the continuing adult level

Assisting in the development of on-the-job training related courses, in accordance with recommendations of local representatives and their specialized requirements

Arranging field trip visits for teachers to upgrade their teaching background in particular occupational areas

Providing, whenever possible, training resources, i.e., raw materials, finished products, equipment, charts, posters, etc., for exhibit and instructional purposes in classrooms and shops

Assisting in making cost studies for specialized programs and courses

Assisting in establishing sequence of courses for proper student development in order that graduates will have proper training in job cluster areas to compete in the job market

Seeking the cooperation, when needed, from other agencies for career education

Public Relations

Supporting Agricultural Education in its direct relationship to the activities of local and state school officials, boards and legislative groups

Helping to obtain speakers to address trade and civic groups, school banquets and assembly programs which concern the development of agricultural programs

Assisting in arranging for publicity subjects to school review, by using their contacts with news media - such as newspapers, trade magazines, radio and television stations - that would not otherwise be available to the school

Participating in radio and T.V. programs designed to sell Agricultural Education to the public

Participating in an "open house" for students, parents and other adults in the community

Inviting teachers, counselors, administrators and students to visit various farms and businesses

Advising employees and their families concerning school programs by posting information on bulletin boards, news stories in company publications and enclosures in pay envelopes with approval of top management

Assisting through donations and help to arrange for funds to advertise and advance specific school programs

Supporting through attendance educational workshops and conferences that advance Agricultural Education

Assisting in evaluating the public relations policies and actions of the school in respect to the community and the overall agricultural programs

Advisory Council Operations

Assisting in setting up and implementing a set of rules and bylaws to insure an active permanent advisory council

Support through regular attendance at meetings, and encourage total attendance of fellow members, to insure a well-represented and effective council

Student Recognition

Providing scholarships and other financial assistance for outstanding graduates who wish to continue their Agricultural Educational training

Providing recognition through prizes, awards and publicity for outstanding students, as approved by appropriate regulatory agencies

Providing recognition for outstanding leadership, and encouraging greater involvement

School Representative

Responsibilities to the Advisory Council

Cooperate and work closely with the Council

Help the Council Chairman to:

formulate the agenda for each meeting

provide advance notices and follow-up communications for each meeting

arrange for and aid the Secretary in writing the minutes of each meeting and disseminate to all members

keep attendance records

notify and communicate with school officials in regard to meetings

Be prepared to offer clear explanations, from the school viewpoint, of any question to come before the ADVISORY COUNCIL or agree to obtain the answer by the next meeting

Arrange for the facilities and equipment of the school to be used by the Council

Help provide needed research and information needed for Council activity

Prepare special reports as requested by the Council

Attend all meetings and establish a personal relationship with all members

Involve the ADVISORY COUNCIL at the inception of a program or consideration of change in curriculum

Help make the Council a continuing activity even after the program is successful

Aid in school approved public relations projects from the Council, releases to media, etc.

Arrange for proper recognition of Council members and their efforts

Advisory Council Chairman

What Do You Do?

The chairman is a highly important person to an ADVISORY COUNCIL. How he operates will often make the difference whether or not the COUNCIL is effective.

He Is Responsible For

Working with the school representative and Council members in setting meeting dates

Being the "driving force" behind planning the functions of the Council and working with the school on an acceptable agenda

Presiding at all Council meetings

Insuring a good personal relationship with all Council members

Working with the school representative on needed information and necessary follow up of Council activities and reports

Council meetings should begin and be concluded on time and conducted without adhering to strict rules of order. The Chairman should provide leadership and give each member an opportunity to express his viewpoint. Firmness and fairness is expected of the chairman. Also another duty is to keep well informed on the progress of the educational program for which the Council was formed.

How The Chairman Operates

Open and close the meeting on time

Review and present all pertinent information

Obtain the views of each member on each item on the agenda

Maintain all discussion to the subject matter at hand

Summarize often and obtain general agreement by group decision

Make sure all Council recommendations are recorded properly in the minutes

Make plans for the next meeting

SAMPLE

Examples of
some activities carried out by various Advisory Councils

Advisory Council's Activities
September to June

(Note: All Activities Must Be "Tailored" To Meet The Needs Of Each Community)

Advisory Council Members (as a group) came to school to "welcome" students into program

Council formed a "Speaker's Bureau." Makes available speakers on career topics of importance to students

Helped to revise form for students to evaluate their training stations

Send a "Thank You" letter to all cooperating employers in training stations, including a copy of rules and regulations for participating students

Attended area, state, and national FFA conferences

Presented a panel discussion to area teacher-coordinator conference

Secured interest and space for a feature story in local newspaper, assisted in its preparation

Arranged for "Student of the Month" for occupational areas publicity in Chamber of Commerce monthly paper to all members

Presented a program on certain careers before civic clubs

Secured radio editorial on certain educational career programs

Arranged for a Career Foundation with specific objectives and made contributions to fund

Members spoke with many students on-the-job to determine viewpoint and adequacy of training

Helped formulate the first award program to cooperating employers on training stations

Facilitated a special mailing of explanatory letters to all community businesses and industries on the school vocational cooperative education program

Participated in special programs on "Careers" before entire student body

Arranged for "Outstanding Student of the Year" award winners to be guests to Annual Chamber of Commerce Banquet, Lions Club Dinner and other interested community service clubs

Arranged for special newspaper coverage for all award winners and the Annual Employer-Employee Banquet

Secured teaching materials and equipment for classroom

Developed set of forms to be used in selecting outstanding student for the year

Secured promotional budget from local Chamber of Commerce of $350.00 with promise of increase

Held one or more meetings on total evaluation of the programs

Conducted a summer project "Development of new training stations"

Appendix D

Sample Agenda

Voc. Ag. Advisory Council
Wednesday, April 15

7:30 p.m.	Meeting called to order	Chairman
	Roll Call	Secretary
	Minutes of Last Meeting	Secretary
	Review of Agenda	Chairman
	Report of the Sub-Committee on Safety Practices Observed in the School Shop and OJT Center	Jim Hensick
	Discussion of report and recommendations	
	Additional Tools and Equipment Needed: Report on status of equipment and tools on hand	Jim Polston, Instr.
	Discussion of report and recommendations	
	Plans for Class Carpentry Project, 1973-1974 School Year: Report of Tentative Plans	Earl Haggard, Prin.
	Discussion and Recommendations	
	Other business	
10:00 p.m.	Adjournment	
	Refreshments	

Appendix E

Examples of items for Consideration by the Committee

July:

- Constitution and by-laws
- Screening training stations
- Screening of students and placement of students
- Listing training standards for training station
- Develop training agreements
- Determining publicity to be released

August:

- Suggestions on wages and hours
- Review course of study and reference materials
- Determine what experiences are needed on the job
- Consider policies on teacher supervision

September:

- Decide on publicity to be released
- Consider special problems that have developed

November:

- Set up qualifications for special awards

February:

- Determine award recipients and determine any special awards

May:

- Evaluation of the program
- Establishing graduates in full-time jobs

Appendix F

IF YOU WANT ME TO SERVE ON A SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE[1]

Mr. Educator:

I am pleased you have asked me to serve as an industry member of an advisory committee to our school system. I shall be delighted to accept your invitation - if you can assure me that I will be involved in an activity which is going to make some worthwhile and important contribution to the education of our youth. I want to be proud enough of the committee's work so that I may brag a little to my family, friends and associates that I was selected to participate - as you, yourself, stated - "because of my reputation as an outstanding member" of the field in which I am earning my living, "as well as for my interest in and understanding of the field of education."

To support my feelings about the importance of my service, I would like to have a letter appointing me on the committee signed by the highest possible school official. The letter should include some biographical information on the chairman and other members of the committee and also tell me exactly what is expected of me as a committee member in the way of advice, assistance, cooperation, money and time. Please note that if you tell me the committee will meet only two or three times a year, I will know that we really aren't going to do anything worthwhile!

On the other hand, if you seriously want help from the committee to improve our educational system, I need to be sure that I will be provided, initially and on a continuing basis, with information concerning educational developments within the school system, as well as at the state and national levels; be invited occasionally to attend local, state and national conventions of educators (you will be surprised by how many I will attend at my own or my company's expense); and that I will occasionally receive a special invitation to attend a school function, a board of education meeting, a state board meeting. I would also like to be kept informed of special studies affecting the educational program of my school system, and if possible, receive copies.

In effect, what I am saying is that if you want me to advise you, I will feel much more comfortable if I know something about you and your environment. And while I am learning, hopefully I am becoming identified with you, the school, and the problems of the educational system. If you can get me to this point you can be assured of my active participation in the school program and on the committee. And beyond offering advice, I will actually cooperate with you to help you achieve your program goals.

How? In every way possible! I would be glad to help raise money for a scholarship fund; to help obtain needed school equipment on loan, as a gift, at special discount; to contribute expendable supplies, instructional and guidance materials, to provide work/study experiences; to employ graduates, to help counsel students; to assist teachers in enriching and expanding their instructional activities; and other services you may request. You name it! What I am really asking is that you, the professional educator, provide me, the interested layman, with counsel and leadership for my committee responsibilities.

[1]National Advisory Council on Vocational Education, Washington, D.C., July 1974 (Mimeo).

I know there will be times when you will ask the committee for something you consider important that for some good reason we will not be able to provide. But we won't just be negative when this happens. We will tell you our problem and try to work things out with you. In the process, we will both learn more about industry and education, and together prove that industry-education cooperation can be a viable way of life for citizens and school people.

Sometimes I might want to do too much and try to get involved in administration. If I do, just point out that the best way I can help you is to give you advice and cooperation and leave the details of day-by-day school operations to you. In reality, I don't even have time to handle all my OWN day-to-day administrative problems, much less yours! But remember - as businessmen, we committee members are problem oriented and if you tell us about your problems we can help you with them, even if it takes time from our personal or business affairs. After all, we expected to spend time with you when we accepted service on the committee.

I would like to be welcomed in the schools as a friend and supporter - not seen as a meddlesome interloper. Naturally there are certain school regulations which I should observe when visiting, and you should make them clear to me. But if I occasionally drop in for a visit, give me a few minutes of your time. Your courtesy will be well repaid. I wouldn't come if I weren't interested!

I would like to know what other schools and school systems are doing about the problems you present to my committee. I want to feel there is some linkage between our school system and others in the area. I would like to know what the private schools are doing and what MDTA educational and training programs are available in the community. I want to understand the relationships which exist between these programs, the State Employment Service, "war-on-poverty" programs, correctional institution training programs and any others that will be providing man-power for industry. I want to know the whole picture, and even get a chance to visit these other educational programs. Perhaps our advisory committees ought to meet together once or twice a year. I want to know about these other programs so that I will not have the nagging feeling that I am being "used" to support one program in opposition to another. I want to feel that I am helping to improve "MY" school's contribution to the total community effort - as a taxpayer, as an employer and as an interested citizen concerned with and involved in improving educational and manpower development programs in my community.

I would like to meet, more than on a token once-a-year basis, with the students in the school or program my committee was organized to serve. I want the students to know my committee exists. In the final analysis, our efforts are supposed to be directed at improving the education and training of students. I want them to tell me to what extent we are succeeding. As a matter of fact, I would like to have each graduating class elect one of its members to serve as an ex-officio member on our committee to tell us, in the first year after graduating, how relevant school really is in terms of real jobs.

I would like some expression of appreciation for my volunteered services and contributions. If this committee is as important as you tell me it is, give it and its members some concrete form of recognition. For example, if I donate a piece of equipment, put my nameplate on it. Send me a framed certificate of appreciation for my services. Hold a special annual event to recognize the services of all advisory committee members. Include our names in the school catalog and annual reports. We all like to see our names in print! Besides, when prospective students, their parents and others see that your programs, as described in the catalog, are receiving advice and assistance from industry people, the programs will gain in stature and prestige. In addition, my company and the industry I represent will be more than ever committed to support you.

When you ask me to attend a committee meeting, I want to know beforehand what will be on the agenda. I will want a brief background statement of the problems to be discussed and several possible approaches to the solution of each. Give me at least two weeks' notice of the meeting date. Make it at a convenient time and preferably at a school. And don't hesitate to remind me about it by letter or a phone call.

I want the meeting to be conducted informally and not to get tied up in parliamentary rules of order. I will want the meeting to be held within reasonable time limits. Don't let it drag on and on. I am used to crisp, businesslike procedures. I will want something to happen as a result of the meeting. I will want to know, as soon after the meeting is over as possible, what did and will happen as a result of our advice and services. I don't want to be asked to attend a meeting to approve something after it has already happened. If I find out I am being used that way, don't be surprised when I become your critic instead of your advisor!

I know I am asking a great deal of you. But I am willing to give a great deal in return. And the more you get from the committee, the better your program will be. The same is true for us, of course. All the committee members, as well as the industries we represent, will be benefitted by having a continuing source of qualified man-power available and by getting a good return from our educational tax dollars. All kinds of benefits will emerge if the committee is effectively used.

In the final analysis, this is exactly what I want - effective utilization of my expertise, my knowledge and my interest in serving one of the most important components of my community - my schools and their students. If you are prepared to tell me how, when and where, I will do my best to help you and will appreciate the chance to serve - particularly if you get me involved in an activity in which I have some special interest. This means, of course, you and I will have to discuss what my special interests are vis-a-vis education and young people.

If you think I speak for myself alone, you are very much mistaken. Most industry representatives who agree to serve on school advisory committees feel as I do. However, too often and in too many situations, their expectations have not materialized.

Why? Because in our experience, we have found that too few educators and school administrators understand what motivates industry people to accept service on a school advisory committee. Or, if they do understand, they have not been able to provide the leadership, time and effort to effectively utilize the committees. If you cannot provide the staff time needed to allow for the full range of interests and desires of your committee to serve the school program, you will be better advised not to establish the committee in the first place. A poorly used committee is worse than no committee at all - you would find that you had created your own Frankenstein. Disgrunted members of poorly used committees frequently become the most active critics of school officials and public education.

Well, that seems to cover everything I had to say. It's up to you now to decide whether you want me to serve on your committee. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

/s/ _____

Samuel M. Burt, a consultant to the National Advisory Council, wrote this article as an open letter. Written as a businessman's reply to an invitation to serve on a school advisory committee, the letter tells the educational community what to expect from a businessman and what a businessman expects from the educational community.